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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/976,182	10/11/2001	Takaaki Shimada	SHC0152	1938
<div>7590 Michael S. Gzybowski Butzel Long 350 South Main Street STE 300 Ann Arbor, MI 46802</div>			<div>EXAMINER ANDERSON, CATHARINE L</div>	
			<div>ART UNIT 3761</div>	<div>PAPER NUMBER</div>
			<div>MAIL DATE 05/25/2007</div>	<div>DELIVERY MODE PAPER</div>

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/976,182

Applicant(s)

SHIMADA ET AL.

Examiner

C. Lynne Anderson

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3761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 March 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 9 and 10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 3 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 9 and 10 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: The heading of Claim 1 indicates the claim is previously presented, when the claim is currently amended. Appropriate correction is required.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 5 March 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the elasticized zones of the front region having the same height as the elasticized zones of the rear region) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

The present claims disclose the heights of the first and second elasticized zones being equal throughout the front and rear waist-encircling regions. This language does not clearly limit the first and second elasticized zones of the front region as having an equal height of the first and second elasticized zones of the rear region. Since Buell discloses the first elasticized zone in the front region is equal in height to the second elasticized zone in the front region (likewise in the rear region), Buell anticipates the present claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Buell et al. (5,931,827).

Buell discloses a disposable pull-on undergarment, as shown in figure 1, comprising a liquid pervious topsheet 24, a liquid impervious backsheet 26, and an absorbent core 28. The undergarment has front and rear waist-encircling regions 28, a crotch region 30, a waist opening and a pair of leg openings. The front and rear waist-encircling regions 28 each comprise a first elasticized zone 64 and a second elasticized zone 60/62. The first and second elasticized zones have heights that extend in the longitudinal direction of the undergarment and are coextensive, as shown in figure 1. The first and second elasticized zones are adjacent each other in the waist-encircling direction of the undergarment, as shown in figure 1. The first and second elasticized zones are extensible, as disclosed in column 9, lines 19-46. The first elasticized zone is more extensible, and therefore has a greater tensile strength, than the second elasticized zone, as disclosed in column 15, lines 1-25, and column 16, lines 38-64. The heights of the first and second elasticized zones are equal to each other in both the front region and in the rear region, as shown in figure 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Buell et al. (5,931,827).

Buell discloses all aspects of the claimed invention but remains silent as to the exact elongation stress values of the first and second elasticized zones 28a and 28b. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to make the first elasticized zone 28a with an elongation stress of 0.2 – 2.0 N/25mm and the second elasticized zone 28b with an elongation stress of 0.1 – 0.6 N/25mm, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2-3 and 9-10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record fails to disclose the claimed invention. Specifically, the closest prior art of record, Buell et al. (5,931,827), fails to disclose a plurality of elastic

members spaced apart from each other and extending in the waist-encircling direction in the first and second elasticized zones, and being attached in an extended condition between the waist elastic members and the leg openings. Buell teaches first and second elasticized zones comprising a stretchable laminate and does not teach the use of a plurality of elastic members. It would not be obvious to substitute a plurality of elastic members that are spaced longitudinally apart from one another for the elastic laminate of Buell, since doing so would destroy the intent of Buell to have a central elasticized laminate zone having elastic properties that differ from the side elasticized laminate zones. The prior art of record therefore fails to disclose or fairly suggest the claimed invention.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

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the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to C. Lynne Anderson whose telephone number is (571) 272-4932. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

CMA
cla
May 23, 2007

TATYANA ZALUKAEVA
SUPERVISORY PRIMARY EXAMINER

